

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 030230  
ORIGIN SS-25

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S/S:S.R.PERITO  
H:KJENKINS

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R 100219Z FEB 77  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 030230

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CZ

SUBJECT:US-CZECHOSLOVAK RELATIONS

REFERENCE: PRAGUE 235

1. THE DEPARTMENT VERY MUCH APPRECIATES YOUR EXCELLENT THOUGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE EFFECT OF CHARTER 77 ON OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. THERE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE PUBLIC AND OFFICIAL CONCERN HERE OVER THE CHARTER 77 EPISODE, AS REFLECTED IN OUR STATEMENT TO THE PRESS OF JANUARY 26. WE CONTINUE TO WATCH THE SITUATION VERY CLOSELY, AND WE APPRECIATE THE EXTENSIVE EMBASSY REPORTING ON THE SUBJECT.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 STATE 030230

2. CHARTER 77 MAY, AS YOU CORRECTLY STATED, AFFECT THE SPEED WITH WHICH WE MOVE AHEAD ON A BROAD FRONT IN OUR RELATIONS. BY LIMITING PROGRESS IN THE NEAR FUTURE, WE CAN REINFORCE THE EXPRESSION OF OUR CONCERN OVER THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS WHOSE ACTS CONSTITUTE A SIMPLE EXPRESSION OF TRUTH RATHER THAN AN ACT OF POLITICAL DISSIDENCE. ADMITTEDLY, FOR THOSE IN POWER IN PRAGUE (AND MOSCOW)

AND FOR THOSE WHOSE POSITIONS DEPEND ON THE CONTINUED EXCLUSION OF TALENTED INDIVIDUALS FROM ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL FIELDS, DESCRIPTIVE

STATEMENTS OF THE CURRENT CZECHOSLOVAK SITUATION AMOUNT TO A POLITICAL CHALLENGE. IT IS PRECISELY THIS SITUATION, OF WHICH CHARTER 77 IS ONLY ONE SIGNIFICANT REFLECTION, WHICH INHIBITS A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US SIMILAR TO THAT ENJOYED BY POLAND.

3. OUR STRATEGY FOR THE TIME BEING, THEN, UNTIL WE SEE WHERE THE CHARTER 77 EPISODE WILL LEAD, WILL BE MUCH AS YOU OUTLINED IT IN REFTTEL.

4. REGARDING THE CULTURAL/SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGES AGREEMENT, DEPT/USIA WISH TO HOLD OFF FOR THE TIME BEING ON THE DECISION TO GO AHEAD WITH PROGRAM NEGOTIATIONS IN MARCH. WE WILL WATCH THE CHARTER 77 SITUATION CLOSELY, AND DETERMINE FROM DEVELOPMENTS WHETHER THOSE TALKS CAN TAKE PLACE, OR WHETHER THEY SHOULD BE RESCHEDULED FOR LATER IN THE SPRING.

5. CLAIMS/GOLD: IN TERMS OF PREPARING THE GROUNDWORK FOR OUR FUTURE MOVES, WE HAD BEEN CONSULTING WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION ON HOW TO PROCEED; THE CHARTER 77 AFFAIR, HOWEVER, HAS MADE US CAUTIOUS ABOUT AN APPROACH TO CONGRESS AT THIS TIME. GIVEN THE SENSITIVITIES ON THE HILL TO THE ISSUE, WE WOULD WANT TO BE CIRCUMSPECT AS WE EXAMINE THE LIKELIHOOD OF CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR A RESOLUTION OF CLAIMS/GOLD. WE WILL BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO DETERMINE THIS AS THE SITUATION IN PRAGUE DEVELOPS.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 030230

LUTION OF CLAIMS/GOLD. WE WILL BE IN A BETTER POSITION TO DETERMINE THIS AS THE SITUATION IN PRAGUE DEVELOPS.

6. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PURSUE A CIVIL AIR AGREEMENT IN ORDER TO PROTECT PAA'S INTERESTS. RE PORT SECURITY WE AGREE THAT WE SHOULD POSTPONE FOR THE TIME BEING NOTIFYING THE CZECHS OF A RELAXATION. CONCERNING TEXTILES, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD GO SLOW IN OUR EFFORTS TO REPLACE THE AGREEMENT WITH A CONSULTATIVE MECHANISM. UNDER THE 1974 GATT MULTIFIBER ARRANGEMENT (MFA) WE ARE REQUIRED TO BRING OUR CURRENT TEXTILE AGREEMENT WITH THE CZECHOSLOVAKS INTO LINE WITH THE MFA'S MORE LIBERAL TERMS OR TO TERMINATE IT. THUS, CONCLUSION OF THE AGREEMENT IS IN OUR INTERESTS, SINCE IT WILL AID US IN FULFILLING ONE OF OUR INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS. IN FACT THE CONSULTATION AGREEMENT IS IN ONE SENSE LESS LIBERAL THAN THE CURRENT AGREEMENT, SINCE THE CZECHOSLOVAKS ARE NOW GUARANTEED MARKED ACCESS AT ABOVE THE CURRENT SHIPPING LEVELS, WHILE ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDER THE NEW AGREEMENT WOULD BE BASED

ON CURRENT TRADE LEVELS. A CABLE ON TEXTILES WILL BE  
COMING SHORTLY.

7. WE DO NOT FEEL THAT THE CURRENT SITUATION SHOULD  
INHIBIT US FROM PUSHING FOR DIVIDED FAMILIES, IMPROVED  
ACCESS TO OFFICIALS, OR IMPROVED MEDIA TREATMENT OF THE  
US. REGARDING THE LATTER, THE EMBASSY SHOULD AT AN  
APPROPRIATE OCCASION NOTE THAT PRESS IMPLICATIONS OF US  
INVOLVEMENT IN ESPIONAGE /SUBVERSION ARE NOT HELPFUL.  
(WE WERE ESPECIALLY TROUBLED BY A NUMBER OF RECENT ARTIC-  
LES IMPLYING THAT VOA IS INVOLVED. THE MOST OBJECTION-  
ABLE APPEARED IN DECEMBER'S PRAHA-MOSKVA, BY F. KOLLAR,  
IN WHICH VOA IS CALLED AN "ESPIONAGE STATION".) WE  
BELIEVE AN EMBASSY OFFICER AT AN APPROPRIATE OCCASION  
SHOULD REGISTER OUR CONCERN OVER THE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST  
VOA, AND EXPRESS OUR VIEW THAT SUCH ALLEGATIONS DO NOT  
CONTRIBUTE TO AN IMPROVED BILATERAL ATMOSPHERE.  
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PAGE 04 STATE 030230

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## Message Attributes

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